

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BERLIN 05532 120935Z

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FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 667

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 5532

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: NATO, PFOR, UR, GE

SUBJECT: V-E DAY CELEBRATIONS

REF: (A) STATE 35348; (B) STATE 57493; (C) STATE 69945

SUMMARY

IN VIEW OF PROBABLY PARTICIPATION BY FRG REPRESENTATIVES
IN CEREMONIES IN EAST BERLIN COMMEMORATING THE 30TH
ANNIVERSARY OF V-E DAY, THE EMBASSY URGES A MORE FLEXIBLE
APPROACH AT THIS TIME TO QUESTIONS OF US AND ALLIED
PARTICIPATION. END SUMMARY

1. DISCUSSIONS WITH BRITISH, FRENCH AND FRG REPRESENTATIVES
IN EAST BERLIN OVER THE PAST SEVERAL DAYS INDICATE A NEED
FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF ALLIED PARTICIPATION IN
EVENTS IN EAST BERLIN COMMEMORATING THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY
OF V-E DAY. (THERE IS ALSO A LACK OF CLARITY IN GUIDANCE
RECEIVED SO FAR. INSTRUCTIONS HAVE USED SUCH PHRASES
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BERLIN 05532 120935Z

AS "GERMAN TERRITORY", "GERMAN SOIL", "GERMANY ITSELF",

AND "GERMANY" IN DISCUSSING ALLIED PARTICIPATION IN V-E DAY CELEBRATIONS.)

2. AT LEAST FOUR TYPES OF EVENTS IN EAST BERLIN TO WHICH MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS WOULD BE INVITED MAY BE SCHEDULED BY THE GDR AND/OR SOVIETS. THESE INCLUDE:

(A) A RECEPTION UNDER EAST GERMAN SPONSORSHIP; (2) A RECEPTION UNDER SOVIET EMBASSY AUSPICES; (3) A WREATH LAYING CEREMONY AT TREPTOW (PROBABLY TO BE NOTIFIED BY THE GDR FOREIGN MINISTRY); AND (4) A COMMEMORATIVE OCCASION (FESTVERANSTALTUNG) IN THE OPERA HOUSE UNDER EAST GERMAN SPONSORSHIP. IN ADDITION, THERE MAY BE A MILITARY PARADE OF SOVIET TROOPS, OR SOVIET TROOPS COMBINED WITH EAST GERMAN MILITARY UNITS..

3. BY WAY OF BACKGROUND, WE UNDERSTAND THAT IN 1965, THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF V-E DAY, KOSYGIN ATTENDED CEREMONIES IN EAST BERLIN WHICH INCLUDED SOVIET AND EAST GERMAN RECEPTIONS, A JOINT MILITARY PARADE BY SOVIET AND GDR UNITS, A WREATH LAYING CEREMONY, AND A COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONY UNDER EAST GERMAN SPONSORSHIP.

WE ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT IN 1970, THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF V-E DAY, THERE WAS NO HIGH LEVEL SOVIET ATTENDANCE; NO MILITARY PARADE; A SOVIET RECEPTION, A WREATH LAYING; AND A COMMEMORATIVE OCCASION AT THE OPERA HOUSE UNDER EAST GERMAN SPONSORSHIP.

4. IN MAY OF 1974, THE 29TH ANNIVERSARY OF V-E DAY, THE BRITISH AND FRENCH WERE ALREADY ESTABLISHED IN THE GDR, BUT FRG REPRESENTATIVES WERE NOT. THE BRITISH AND FRENCH AMBASSADORS ATTENDED A WREATH LAYING CEREMONY, AN EAST GERMAN RECEPTION AND A COMMEMORATIVE SERVICE AT THE OPERA HOUSE. THIS IS A PRECEDENT OF WHICH THE BRITISH AND FRENCH HERE ARE KEENLY AWARE. WHILE SEEKING ALLIED SOLIDARY NOW THAT THE US HAS OPENED ITS EMBASSY, THE BRITISH AND FRENCH ALSO BELIEVE IT WILL BE DIFFICULT FOR THEM TO DEPART SIGNIFICANTLY FROM THE PATTERN OF ATTENDANCE THEY WORKED OUT JOINTLY A YEAR AGO.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BERLIN 05532 120935Z

5. THE BRITISH AND FRENCH NOW HAVE ESSENTIALLY THE SAME INSTRUCTIONS WE DO. THE FRG REPRESENTATIVES HERE ARE AS YET WITHOUT FORMAL INSTRUCTIONS, BUT ACTING HEAD OF THE FRG MISSION BRAUTIGAM SAYS THAT THE FRG RESPONSE TO V-E DAY CELEBRATIONS GENERALLY, AND FRG PARTICIPATION IN EVENTS IN EAST BERLIN SPECIFICALLY, WILL BE DISCUSSED BY GAUS IN HIS MEETING WITH CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT ON APRIL 17.

6. BRAUTIGAM STATES THAT GAUS WILL URGE FRG ATTENDANCE AT ALL COMMEMORATIVE EVENTS IN EAST BERLIN, AND HE EXPECTS THAT SCHMIDT WILL AGREE. BRAUTIGAM SAYS THAT HIS VIEW, AND THAT OF GAUS, IS THAT IF THE FRG REPRESENTATIVES IN THE GDR DO NOT PARTICIPATE IN THESE EVENTS, THEIR ACTIONS WILL NOT ONLY SIGNAL SOME FORM OF "WEST GERMAN SHYNESS" WITH REGARD TO THE WAY WORLD WAR II ENDED, BUT WILL ALSO LEND SUPPORT TO THE IDEA THAT THE FRG IS NOT YET RID OF NAZISM. BRAUTIGAM AND GAUS BELIEVE THAT THE FIELD SHOULD NOT BE LEFT TO THE "OTHER GERMANS". IN THIS SPIRIT THEY ATTENDED THE CELEBRATIONS COMMEMORATING THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LIBERATION OF HUNGARY FROM THE NAZIS SEVERAL DAYS AGO (BERLIN 5461). TO BOYCOTT V-E DAY CELEBRATIONS, BRAUTIGAM ARGUES, WOULD INCREASE TENSIONS BETWEEN THE FRG AND GDR NOT ONLY IN THE CONTEXT OF BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS, BUT MORE GENERALLY AS WELL. BRAUTIGAM SAYS THAT THE FRG REPRESENTATIVES WILL RESERVE THE OPTION OF WALKING OUT OF ANY OCCASION (THE MOST LIKELY BEING THE CEREMONIES AT THE OPERA HOUSE) AT WHICH INTOLERABLY OFFENSIVE REMARKS ABOUT THE FRG ARE MADE BY EAST GERMAN SPEAKERS. TO MINIMIZE THIS EVENTUALITY BRAUTIGAM WILL RECOMMEND TO GAUS THAT A QUIET WORD BE PASSED TO GDR AUTHORITIES (PROBABLY NIER) IN ADVANCE OF THESE CELEBRATIONS URGING THAT THE ANNIVERSARY OF V-E DAY NOT BE MADE AN OCCASION FOR OFFENSIVE REMARKS ABOUT THE FRG BY THE GDR.

7. IF THE USSR SENDS A HIGH RANKING REPRESENTATIVE TO BERLIN, AND SO FAR THERE HAS BEEN NO INDICATION OF SUCH AN INTENTION, THE PROSPECT OF EAST GERMAN SPEECHES OFFENSIVE TO THE FRG MAY DIMINISH IN VIEW OF LARGER SOVIET INTERESTS. AN FRG WALK-OUT WOULD BE TROUBELISOME
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 BERLIN 05532 120935Z

TO ALLIED REPRESENTATIVES WHO MIGHT HAVE TO DECIDE ON THE SPOT WHETHER TO JOIN THEIR WEST GERMAN COLLEAGUE IN LEAVING THE HALL.

8. IF THE ALLIES DECIDE NOW NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN COMMEMORATIVE EVENTS IN EAST BERLIN, WE MAY FIND OURSELVES OUT OF STEP WITH THE FRG REPRESENTATIVES. THE MATTER IS COMPLICATED IN A PRACTICAL WAY BY THE FACT THAT THE EAST GERMANS AND SOVIETS NORMALLY DO NOT EXTEND INVITATIONS FOR SUCH FUNCTIONS MORE THAN A DAY, OR AT MOST TWO DAYS, IN ADVANCE OF THE DATE ON WHICH THEY ARE TO OCCUR.

9. THE EMBASSY REQUESTS THE DEPARTMENT TO GIVE FURTHER CONSIDERATION TO THE NATURE OF US PARTICIPATION IN

V-E DAY CELEBRATIONS IN EAST BERLIN IN LIGHT OF THE
INFORMATION REPORTED ABOVE. WE RECOMMEND GREATER
FLEXIBILITY AT THIS TIME TO PERMIT FRG INTENTIONS TO
BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.

10. THE BRITISH AND FRENCH EMBASSIES ARE SENDING
SIMILAR MESSAGES TO THEIR CAPITALS. BRAUTIGAM HAS
PROMISED TO KEEP US INFORMED. GROVE

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